

REMARKS

The pending Office Action addresses and rejects pending claims 48-62 and 64-68.

Applicants amend independent claim 48 to replace the word “piercing” with “puncturing,” and to recite pulling the piercing member into a pair of coacting jaws to pull the punctured tissue into the pair of coacting jaws. Independent claims 53 and 61 are similarly amended. Support for this amendment can be found throughout the specification. No new matter is added.

Applicants thank the Examiner for extending the courtesy of a personal interview to Applicant’s representatives on December 2, 2008. During the interview, agreement was reached that the claims, as amended herein, distinguish over the pending rejections since none of the prior art references teach or even suggests pulling a piercing member to pull punctured tissue into a pair of coacting jaws.

In light of the above, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and allowance thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney for Applicant if such communication is deemed to expedite prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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